



A James Bond Lifestyle

Without Q branch, James Bond would have probably been killed on his second assignment. The gadgets developed by Q have saved Bond's life countless times, and as the films have progressed so has the technology. Now, there are a selection of spy gadgets on the market that would make Q proud. We explore the best of them.

Watches

JAMES Bond generally prefers wearing a Rolex or Omega watch throughout the series, but when issued with a specialty watch from Q-Branch, 007 has utilised every gadget under the sun, from a wrist dart gun to circular saws.

The recent watch of choice for James Bond has been the Omega Seamaster, which in real life comes fitted with a "Helium Relief Valve". This is a feature not even James Bond would need when diving, as it is only used by scientists doing

deep sea research. The valve prevents the crystal from popping when depressurising. In *Die Another Day*, Q Branch replaces this valve with a detonator pin. The OMEGA Seamaster Planet Ocean 600m Co-Axial Chronometer worn by Daniel Craig in *Quantum of Solace* retails for around £2,500.

Despite no official announcement, the experts are predicting Omega will stay on as the watch product placement partner in the new Bond movie *Skyfall*, due for release in the UK on October 26.

It does come as a surprise that as a subscriber to cutting edge technology James Bond hasn't moved on to the latest in watch phones. Weighing in at just 91g, and measuring 39 by 60 by 14mm, the LG GD910 touch screen phone watch has all the functionality of a standard mobile handset, literally at the flick of a wrist. Coming with a £550 price tag, the GD910, as expected, is capable of calls and text, as well as being Bluetooth enabled, and media savvy, with a calendar, music player, voice recorder and a memo pad.

The only downside is the low resolution camera at 0.3 megapixels, and the contortions required to point the camera at anything apart from yourself. 007 may be waiting for better resolution and video capability, or more likely, a distinguished, classically formal Omega-quality look, which will no doubt come with a corresponding price tag.

Pens

A common spy gadget is the humble pen, cleverly incorporating a host of different devices, from cameras to poison. *Goldeneye* saw Q develop an explosive silver Parker jotter pen. Containing a four second fuse, the pen was armed by simply clicking the top three times.

The jotter is a classic pen with a stainless steel cap, barrel and button with chrome coloured trim. Not only is it still widely available, but with a price around the £5 mark, this may be the most useful and affordable James Bond gadget around.

James Bond has also been a fan of Mont Blanc pens, using a slightly tacky Mont Blanc 149 with a Union Jack flag on the barrel in *Never Say Never Again*, and a Mont Blanc Solitaire in *Octopussy*, equipped with a listening device in the removable blind cap. The Solitaire was also

dual barrel, filled with a concentrated mixture of nitric and hydrochloric acids. The current Solitaire pens retail around the £1,000 mark.

Spy pens are surprisingly affordable on the market, with the latest from Swann ranging from £43 - £65. The top of the range is the HD PenCam which can record 720p videos and capture 1600 x 1200 JPEG images. It has a microSD card slot that supports up to 16GB of storage space and a battery life of 45 minutes, recharged through a USB connection.

Cameras

007 appears to have no allegiance to a camera manufacturer, with the selection of a Minox A back in 1969 in *On Her Majesty's Service* and then a Leica M3 in the novel *Goldfinger*. The former sub miniature camera in its various models was for years the world's most widely used spy camera. It was ultra small at 82 x 28 x 16 mm and easy to conceal and operate in one hand. It could take excellent photographs of documents at close range so was a natural for clandestine photography. It only just made the film, however, as the Minox A went out of production in the year the film was released.

Naturally, cameras can be hidden in a variety of regular-use items. 007 has recorded images through hidden cameras in devices ranging from a reel-to-reel tape recorder in *From Russia With Love* to a ring in *A View To A Kill*. Stealth cameras are surprisingly common place now, used not only as nanny-cams and by private detectives, but also by the more advanced mystery shoppers. Body worn cameras range from the lower end £118 smiley face badge camera with Micro SD card recording system, to high resolution cameras hidden in buttons, caps and ties, up to the recently released high definition touch screen digital video recorder and covert camera spy glasses at £598.

Coming from left field is the Zippo Style Digital Cigarette Lighter Camera with a 64 MB SDRAM memory that stores 104 standard or 30 high resolution images, easily downloaded via USB cable. This is a steal at £28 – not a bad price for a 1.3 MP camera. At least it is more subtle than the £62 James Bond Stealth Digital Camera from Digital Dream, also disguised within a Zippo case. The manufacturers must have missed their stealth training as they plastered a sticker on the front of the lighter telling the world that it is a James Bond camera.



(1)



(2)



(3)



(4)



(5)



(6)

BOX (1) Watch Phone; (2) Swann PenCam; (3) Minox A; (4) Zippo Style Digital Cigarette Lighter Camera; (5) Button camera; (6) Spy glasses